



SUPERDOOM

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SUPERDOOM

selected poems

MELISSA BRODER



TIN HOUSE / Portland, Oregon

to my father

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PRAYER OF THE TEENAGE WAIFS

We want security and we want out!
The groceries have cobwebs. French toast sticks
and sickie chicken sausages turn lettuce
for breakfast. Put dinner in a locket,
then sniff to get to clavicle heaven
where Mommy gets pinched and shock treatments
are ice capades, Sweet’N Low sensations

of Fatherland. Oh Fatherland! She’s been
a bad babysitter. Deliver us
from Burger King with *People* magazine.
Let the basement be our basement, the bones
and ringtones our only breath in mirrors;
let mammaries unbloom, let fumes be food
and we’ll massacre into cylinders.

KING JAMES APPROXIMATELY

Lately I'm practicing practicing god's will,
not my own, like the lusty astronaut

who drove a two-pound hammer drill from Houston
to Orlando, wearing a diaper

so she wouldn't have to pull over
before kidnapping her lover's wife.

I didn't think I'd live long enough
to see me still being me, but Saturn

returns with a teenage trick: steal packages
of fake meat from the deli counter and count

the slices aloud; then eliminate them
out the window of a speeding car, each piece

a gamey hood ornament: bologna
Jetta, ham Corolla, smoked turkey taxi.

How should I know god's will? I'm making choices
on crumpled pieces of fake meat tossed in the air.

In the old days, I knew it on my father's face
when he saw the bologna car, turned to me and stared.

MEAT HEART

Listen wormhead
There is no celery emergency
No rutabaga for alarm
No evil peach in your vein of air
Or pomegranate on high alert
Though kiwi seeds may streak the soil
And tubers crop up bruised
And cornhusk filaments
Still jacket tongues
There is only Slim Jim love
And taco glow
And all-night burger magic

FAUNA

They called it a meat prayer
blood bubbles to heaven.
We would roast Mr. White
with cherries on a spit
by the ocean.

They promised me
pina colada.

They promised the meal
would suffocate
all memory
until I screamed
dear rabbit god!

But I remember everything
the evening's fabric
lacking candles
no sense of orchid

how I said
I would rather dream
of Jerusalem
than go
to Jerusalem
over his gumbo ribs.
Oh drumless air!
Oh garbage food!

No more feathers
than boiler chicken
no more ascension
than sweetbreads.

I split his lip for figs
and lit a limb
but I am still
carrying my head.

ASTRAL LOCKET

She went into the silent room
and in the silent room there had never been a word
only the breath before the word

and she was deep within herself
her own breathing and the breathing of the world
the Earth swelling and pumping

thick blank in all canals
elevating her entire body
then vanishing her completely

and it felt good to be bodiless
in this pre-word vanishing

then she was offered up the men
one for each of the rest of her days
with their middle fingers and axes
hymnbones and ligaments

the men who meant an end to vanishing

for in the silent room
one must return all gifts
to make room for other gifts

a light for blood exchange

the chance to float in different ways
than the silence already floated her
which was already
so good

FORGOTTEN NOTHING

Can you die with the Earth
yes I can die
green green grass make me make me

I am going to become something pure and true
I am built for becoming
though I was made came
I unknew my arrival because
I unknew the way

I say nobody knows the way besides the way
I say once was lost but now am lost

I say never asked to wake
please make the waking gentle
for this woke child with shut eyes

I AM ABOUT TO BE HAPPY

Can you feel it?

You are art and you are not art

Yesterday I thought it was good to be dead

I babbled, a wildwoman boiling your pelt

I wore you as my t-shirt and mouth

I said it was good for you to be art

Save me from death, let me rise from the dead

Today I bury your body

I'M COMING

The people talked to me of god

Then god talked to me of god

God said *do not move*

I said *I know*

And then got very still and knew that I was not

And saw our shadows in the room

Two wild and kindly dogs

Leaking light from out their wet jaws

The good of breath from where we all began

Though our minds try to tell a different story

A tale of man and his machete

Murder of our dogs when we fake being men

Or live a lifetime in the human codes

Fierce we cut the shadows with our seeing-eye bones

Gently then we dress the wounds

In nothing

That will lead us back to Earth